

In sports programs, a cable TV station is blocked if the same game is being shown on a local TV station. That is well and good for SDTV games, but what if the cable company is showing the game in HDTV and the local station is not? If we are to encourage adoption of HDTV, it would be unfair to block out the HDTV broadcast. Furthermore, this is frustrating to people who have HDTV's and cannot watch certain HDTV broadcast.

I am speaking of the coming ACC basketball tournament. ESPN is broadcasting the games in HDTV; however, a local affiliate, Raycom sports, is also broadcasting the game on local stations, and they have yet to make the switch to HDTV.
<http://sports.espn.go.com/sports/tvlistings/schedule?date=20050311&network=2>

I realize that blackout of SDTV cable channels is important. But if we want to help HDTV adoption along, we cannot blackout the HDTV broadcast when local the local broadcast is in SDTV.

Please allow a small exemption to the blackout rule where the cable HDTV format is not blocked out if the local channels are not broadcasting in HDTV.